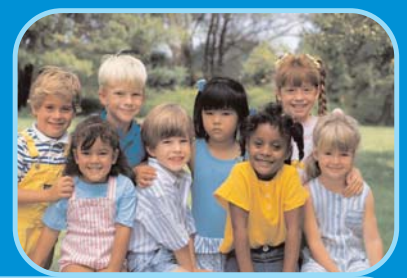


For the Children



Fall 2005



Foster/Adoptive Parent News

Back to School



As we approach fall everyone starts thinking about going back to school. Parents seem to count the days while children are trying to get their last bit of fun and freedom in before returning to school. There are several ways to prepare and make the transition back to school easier. These can work for traditional school schedules as well as year round school schedules. While returning to school is an exciting time, it is also a time filled with anticipation and fear. Being prepared will help reduce the fear and anticipation that is felt.

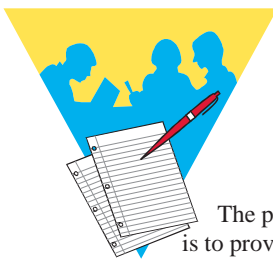
Some things you can do are:

1. **School supplies** - many schools publish a list of supplies needed for the coming year. When you find out what the supplies are go early and buy them. This way you can avoid the crowds and get a good price. Also buy in bulk if you have room. You will undoubtedly need lots of pencils, pens and paper so it doesn't hurt to stock up. They don't go bad.
2. **Clothing** - assess what your child currently has and determine what still fits and is in good condition. Then you will know what else will need to be purchased. A few new outfits always make a child feel good and confident, especially when walking into a new classroom and environment.
3. **Grooming** - Stock up now on the personal care items, restock toothbrushes and determine the order for showers.
4. **Sleep schedule transition** - During the time the children are not in school, are they allowed to stay up later and wake up later? A few weeks before school starts have them go to bed earlier and begin waking them up earlier. This way they will be getting used to the earlier times and will make the transition to school much easier. If they fight the earlier bedtime. Let them read in bed at the earlier time so they are still used to being in bed at that time.
5. **If you get the opportunity, meet the teacher.** This will allow both you and the child to get to know the teacher prior to the first day of school.
6. **Pack backpacks and lunches** the night before if at all possible and keep them in a central location so that they will be remembered when walking out the door. That way if you do end up rushing, they will at least have what they need.

Of course there are many other things that will have to be done to get back to school but the easier the transition the less stress will be put on all involved. It can make for a peaceful back to school start instead of a hectic dash to get them there on time.

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The Educational Records of Foster Youth

The primary concern of most foster parents is to provide a loving stable home for each and every foster child. Secondary, but no less important is that child's education and maintenance of educational records.

Too often progress reports are received, posted on the refrigerator for a few weeks and then discarded. Unfortunately, this leaves our foster youth dependent on the school system for a history of grades, classes taken, citizenship, identified learning disabilities, and standardized test scores. Too often when a child is transferred from one school to another, the child's school records are slow to follow if not lost in the bureaucracy.

Recently, DCS has undertaken this issue and has determined that the assistance of foster parents is necessary in gathering and maintaining school records. In response to this need, DCS staff has initiated a pilot project in the Rancho Cucamonga Region.

This pilot seeks to improve communication between DCS as an agency and Foster parents where foster youth's education, medical, and contact information is recorded through a form named "All Placements and Six-Month Health and Education Passport (HEP) Record" (DCS 318 CPS Pilot). Though the title is a little deceptive, it is meant to jog the memory of all concerned as the form needs to be completed upon placing a child with a foster parent and at 6-month intervals, in order to update these records on a regular basis.

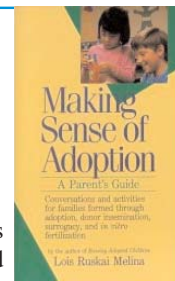
We realize this may be more work for foster parents, but obtaining and updating this information on a regular basis is in the best interest of all our foster youth and this goal can not be achieved without your help.



Making Sense of Adoption

by: Lois Ruskai Melina

Reviewed by: Sunni Reed, LCSW, SSP



Published in 1989, this is one of the early books on adoption issues. The author's intended reading audience is any type of adoptive family from stepparent, to donor insemination to traditional adoption.

Ms. Melina's book starts out by explaining that even though she did provide an environment where her own children would feel free to explore adoption and ask questions, she realized one day that her daughter had been thinking of adoption for a long time without ever expressing her thoughts to her family.

Ms. Melina encourages parents to approach adoption with a respect for the intellectual and emotional development of children in general. What parents learn about helping children express their concerns about adoption can serve as a model for helping children express their thoughts and feelings in other situations as well.

She explores the importance of looking at the aspects and issues of your child's birth parents and their situation. Then, asking yourself what aspects make it difficult or uncomfortable for you, as the adoptive parent to discuss with your child. She advises parents to anticipate their child's thoughts and questions as he or she grows and develops. She asks parents and the general public to carefully consider the impact of the language you use when speaking about those who are touched by adoption.

Lois Melina helps adoptive parents learn to anticipate and respond to their children's often unspoken questions about their past. She provides hands-on, concrete examples of how to approach the subject of adoption with children of different ages. She provides sample conversations, and adoption-sensitive activities appropriate to the age of the child. She points out what to expect in the way of questions and concerns of children of different ages. Each section has a related "activity" to help reader integrate and apply the covered material.

As an adoptive parent herself, Lois Melina has "been there", which lends credibility to her writing. Her book reinforces the fact that adoption is indeed a lifelong process. I would recommend it to any adoptive family. It's a very basic book on how to create an open attitude and an environment that helps children successfully deal with and work through adoption issues. Her suggestions are all aimed at helping children achieve self-worth and confidence about their place in the world as an adopted person.

IEHP OPEN ACCESS PHONE NUMBER:

NOTE: When calling IEHP for health care information on a foster child placed in your care, please use the following phone number for a direct connection to the Open Access Unit.

1 (800) 706-4347



STATE FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATIONS/ STATE CARE PROVIDER ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTATIVES

San Bernardino Foster Parent Association:

Anita Hearne, President PHONE: (909) 336-0834
P. O. Box 2307 FAX: none
Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352 EMAIL: none

Association Meeting:

3rd Monday-7:00pm
Fellowship Hall
First Church of God
2595 Date St., SBDO
No meetings in December

Foster and Relative Emphasis Association (FARE):

Carolyn Buchanan, President PHONE: (760) 951-8877
13972 Luna Road FAX: NONE
Victorville, CA 92392-7445 EMAIL: non

3rd Monday - 6:00pm - 9:00 pm
Victorville CPS
15480 Ramona Ave.

Inland Valley Foster Parent Association/Southern Regional Vice President:

Patricia Negus, President PHONE: (909) 628-4023
12419 Oaks FAX: (909) 902-9969
Chino, CA 91710 EMAIL: none

1ST Monday - 6:30pm - 9:30 pm
Ontario Doubletree Hotel
222 N. Vineyard Ave.
**No meetings in January, July, August,
October & December**

Morongo Basin Foster Parent Association:

Kathy Bingham, President PHONE: (760) 365-4028
7012 Prescott Avenue FAX: (760) 365-4028(call first)
Yucca Valley, CA 92284 EMAIL: none

2nd Thursday-6:30 pm
Pomona Bank
57291-29 Palms Hwy
No meetings in July, August or December

Victor Valley Loving Hearts Association:

Ethel Moon, President PHONE: (760) 247-7836
15213 Ramona Avenue FAX: (760) 247-7837
Apple Valley, CA 92307 EMAIL: ethel.jim@verizon.net

3rd Thursday - 7:00pm - 9:00 pm
Victorville CPS
15480 Ramona Ave.
No meetings in July, August or December

High Desert Care Provider Association:

Pat Mathews, President PHONE: (760) 253-7726
25524 Dayton Avenue FAX: (760) 253-7726
CA 92311 EMAIL: froggie@mscomm.com

3rd Tuesday - 6:30pm-8:30pm
Victorville CPS
15480 Ramona Ave.
No meetings in July, August or DecemberBarstow,

GREAT/ Kinship Care Foster Parent Association:

Ida Valencia, President PHONE: (760) 345-2072
45074 Big Canyon St. FAX: (760) 345-2072 (call first)
Indio, CA 92201 EMAIL: none

2nd Thursday - 10:00am - Noon
Whole Enchilada Restaurant
10276 Foothill Blvd.
Rancho Cucamonga

California State Foster Parent Association:

Cora Pearson, President (310) 539-0268
24414 Marigold Avenue FAX: (310) 539-8120
Harbor City, CA 90710

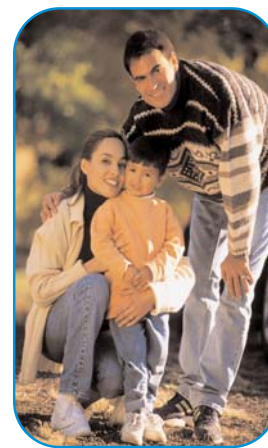
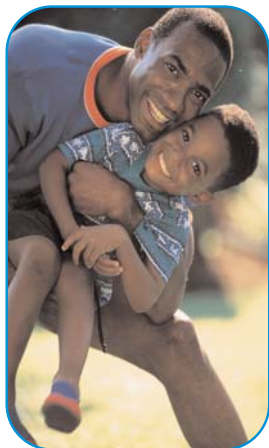
Nina Coake, Past President (909) 947-8323
1456 E. Philadelphia Sp 240
Ontario, CA 91761

California State Care Providers Association:

Fred Leiner, President (818) 998-4461
9849 Glade Avenue FAX: (818) 998-4204
Chatsworth, CA 91311 Email: fred@fosterparents.com

Foster Care Ombudsman:

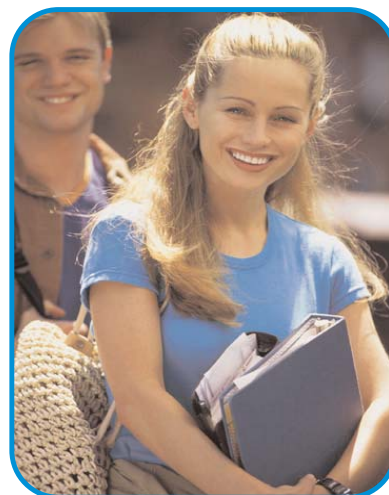
1-877-846-1602



Building a Better Reader

Children learn to read at their own pace. While some seem to jump right in and enjoy reading others approach it more hesitantly or seem to struggle with it. The best thing to remember is that continuous support and reinforcement will help any child become a better reader. Below are some tips to help.

- **Picture Reading** - even children too young to be able to read can enjoy this one. Books with pictures get all children interested in the story. As you read to them they can look at the photos and will at some point start to connect the words on the page to the pictures.
- **Read it 100 times** and more. Repetition creates comfort in exploring. Also the more often they hear the words, the more they begin to associate the spoken word with the written word.
- **Point to words** as you are reading them. Also if you come to a word that they know let them say it. It gets them involved in the story.
- **Do it together.** Let your child pick the book to read or decide which one to buy. Have them hold the book or turn the pages. It lets them know that the book is for them.
- **Read together every day.** This will help reinforce everything that they have learned. Pick a time that you child is relaxed, a time of day when they are more calm. If they lose interest or get fidgety just stop and try it again later. The goal is to try to read to them at least 20 minutes each day and to make it an enjoyable experience.
- **Ask questions.** When you ask questions it engages your child further into the story. Questions can range from what just happened, to what do you think is going to happen next. You can also have them point to letters that are different or shapes in the story. Don't overwhelm them with questions and if they seem to be getting frustrated move on. Make the time fun and entertaining.
- **Read it by heart.** All children eventually memorize their favorite stories and can recite them. The goal is to get them to recognize the spoken word with the written word. You can help guide them through the text as they recite their favorite story.



15th Annual Make a Difference Day

Make a Difference Day, created by USA Weekend Magazine encompasses millions of volunteers working together in their communities to make a difference. This is a national day that is a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors. It is always held on the 4th Saturday of every October. This year's event will be held on October 22, 2005. Last year 3 million people volunteered to help out their neighbors and community.

This is an opportunity to help someone else. It shows children the benefits of helping others. They also learn about volunteering and how they can make a difference.

Locally, **First 5 of San Bernardino** has joined in with their community partners to participate on this day. Their goal is to improve some licensed family child care homes. If you are interested in joining their project you can contact the First 5 office at (909) 386-7706.

This does not have to limit you. Make A Difference Day can mean visiting the elderly, donating clothes, helping clean up a neighbors yard or coming together as a group and tackling a larger project.

If you choose to participate, whatever you do will help someone else in need. What better lesson than to show our children the positive effects our own actions can have on others.

Thank you for the difference you make to our children on a daily basis. It doesn't go unnoticed.



Above Ground Pools - Reminder



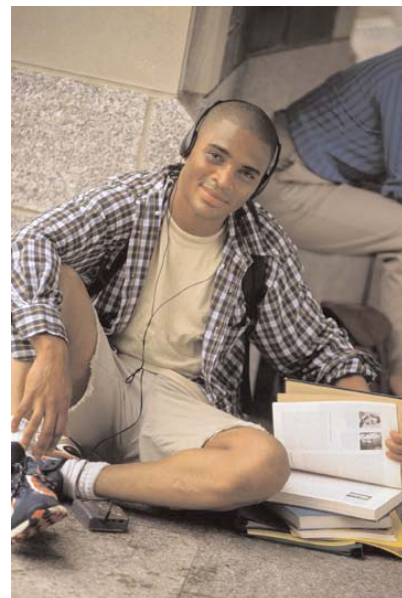
With summer here and all of us looking for ways to cool down there are still certain things that we must be aware of. Above ground pools, like the ones you can buy at discount stores, must be treated the same as any other body of water. Please remember the licensing requirements when it comes to pools.

If you have an above ground pool, please contact your licensing worker with this information.

To ensure the safety of children in your care, please be sure that your pool (and you) are meeting the following Foster Family Home Regulations:

1. If you intend to care for children under age 10 or children with special needs, you must either: A.) fence your pool with an enclosure that meet standards, or 2.) cover your pool with an acceptable cover.
2. Remember that children can drown in just a few inches of water. Therefore, Regulations state that ALL bodies of water (in-ground pools, above-ground pools, spas, ponds, fixed-in-place wading pools, fountains, etc.) must be appropriately fenced or covered.
3. Remember that when a child (of any age) is using the pool, he/ she must be supervised by an adult who is capable of rescuing that child if the need arises.
4. To obtain more information about specific pool regulations, please call the Licensing Worker in your area or refer to Section 89387(d)(e)(f)(g) of the California Regulations for Foster Family Homes, Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5.

**For further questions or information
contact your Licensing Worker.**



Taking Care of Business Day

This special day is offered for anyone interested in becoming a Foster/Adoptive Parent. They can attend orientation, TB test, get livescanned, complete paperwork and get questions answered about foster care and adoption. Refreshments are provided.

The following are the next scheduled date:

September 24, 2005

November 5, 2005

If you know someone who is interested in becoming a Foster/Adoptive Parent, have them call to register.

1-800-722-4477

(909) 891-3381

**If interested in becoming a foster/adoptive parent please call
1-800-722-4477 or (909) 891-3381.**



San Bernardino County
Department of Children's Services
Foster/Adoptive Home Services
412 W. Hospitality Lane, 2nd Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415

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